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Book Notices.

A Life of Jesus.

The Prince of Peace; or the Beautiful Life of Jesus: a graphic and thoughtful narrative of the pathways trodden, the scenes visited, etc., etc. By Isabella M. Alden, (Pansy). With engravings, photogravures, etc. Philadelphia: Huber; Springfield, Mass.: Willey and Co.

This book has three characteristic features, (1) the language is simple and clear, (2) the imagination has been given large range in dealing with the condensed narratives of the Gospels, (3) the illustrations are abundant, in good taste, and generally a real help to the understanding of the text. No one can fail to be attracted by the pictures and it is but a step to becoming interested in the narrative. There is a refreshing self-control exercised in the "preaching" element which this life contains. The stories, while amplified in every detail, are left largely to teach their own lesson. The author has introduced a good deal of exegesis although it is mostly sugar-coated and easy to swallow. Hard work has been put into it, and the result is that it is for the most part easy, and at the same time profitable, reading. It would not be difficult to criticize the book in details. One feels sometimes that the material which is supplied by the author's fancy is, in some instances, exceedingly far-fetched and too ingenious to be true. It is, however, as a whole, a useful addition to popular literature on the life of Jesus. The illustrations are selected from many sources and show that the publishers have spared no expense in obtaining and reproducing them. Such a book in the home would prove a blessing to the young people as an interesting story in itself, a charming collection of engravings illustrating the highest of themes, and an introduction to or commentary upon the Four Gospels. Older persons would find it entertaining and instructive. It is pure, sweet, wholesome, uplifting. It has a mission. It will do much good.

Dr. MacLaren's Sermons.

The Holy of Holies: Sermons on Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth chapters of the Gospel of John. By Alexander MacLaren, D. D. New York: Macmillan and Co. Pp. 379.

Spiritual insight, delicacy of expression and a strong grasp of the essentials of the Gospel characterize these latest sermons of Dr. MacLaren. In many respects he is ideally qualified for handling these marvellous chapters of John. There is a repose and a serenity about the treatment which is in harmony with their contents. Declamation and polemic are left far behind. These sermons are meditations, yet not losing themselves in mere musing, but having a didactic force, grappling to the life of the reader with questions and suggestions and aspirations which cannot be shaken off. The book is not one which invites criticism but rather disarms it by its subject and its spirit. For careful and quiet reading, for devotional uses, as a tonic for the spirit and a refreshment to the heart, it is invaluable, and many will find it a treasury of high and noble impulse and enduring inspiration.